

Message Text

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56

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 SAB-01 CPR-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SSO-00 DHA-02 IO-13 SCCT-01 SY-05

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P R 061828Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1634

INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, VE, UY

SUBJECT: DIPLOMATIC CORPS MEETING ON VENEZUELAN EMBASSY INCIDENT

1. APPARENTLY ACTING ON THE SUGGESTION OF THE AMBASSADOR OF PANAMA, AND PERHAPS ONE OR TWO OTHERS, THE PAPAL NUNCIO CALLED A MEETING OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS WHICH WAS HELD AT THE NUNCIATURA ON SATURDAY, JULY 3 IN THE MORNING. THE CORPS WAS VIRTUALLY 100 PERCENT REPRESENTED.

2. OPENING THE MEETING THE VENEZUELAN AMBASSADOR DESCRIBED HIS VERSION OF THE INCIDENT IN WHICH A YOUNG WOMAN HAD BEEN FORCIBLY REMOVED FROM THE REGION OF HIS RESIDENCE. (PREVIOUS MESSAGES HAVE INDICATED THE DETAILS AS WE KNOW THEM.) THE AMBASSADOR SAID THAT THE WOMAN IN QUESTION CAME OVER THE WALL INTO THE GARDEN FROM A GARDEN OF A NEIGHBORING HOUSE. THEN A MAN WHO HAD BEEN SITTING IN A VOLKSWAGEN PARKED ACROSS THE STREET CAME AND ORDERED THE GATE GUARD (A URUGUAYAN POLICEMAN WHO THE AMBASSADOR SAYS IS NOW UNDER ARREST) TO OPEN THE GATE, WHICH HE DID. HE THEN ENTERED AND FORCIBLY REMOVED THE WOMAN. IN THE PROCESS THERE WAS AT LEAST SOME SCUFFLING WITH ONE OR TWO MEMBERS OF THE VENEZUELAN EMBASSY WHO HAD COME INTO THE GARDEN ATTRACTED BY THE ACTIVITY. THE AMBASSADOR SAID

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THAT THE PERSON WHO ENTERED WAS A MEMBER OF AN URUGUAYAN SECURITY

FORCE AND THAT HE HAD BEEN TOLD HE IS KNOWN AS "CACHO". UPON LATER QUESTIONING BY SOME OF THE AMBASSADORS HE WAS VERY IMPRECISE AS TO HOW HE COULD BE CERTAIN THAT THE SO-CALLED "CACHO" WAS ACTUALLY THE PERSON WHO ENTERED THE GARDEN. THE AMBASSADOR IS A RATHER ELDERLY AND FEEBLE MAN. HE TENDS TO RAMBLE IN HIS DISCUSSION OF THIS INCIDENT ABOUT WHICH HE FEELS VERY INTENSELY. FOR HIS PART HE IS FIRMLY CONVINCED THAT THE INTRUDER WAS AN URUGUAYAN AGENT.

3. FOLLOWING THE VENEZUELAN AMBASSADOR'S PRESENTATION THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE DISCUSSION. IN THE BEGINNING, MANY OF THE LATINO AMBASSADORS SEEMED TO GET WAY OFF COURSE BY MAKING IMPASSIONED SPEECHES ABOUT THE SACRED RIGHT OF ASYLUM AND ITS VIOLATION. EVENTUALLY, HOWEVER, THEY DECIDED THAT SINCE THE INCIDENT HAPPENED SO RAPIDLY IT WOULD BE A MISTAKE TO BASE ANY ACTION ON A CLAIMED VIOLATION OF ASYLUM. THERE HAD, OBVIOUSLY, BEEN NO OPPORTUNITY FOR THE WOMAN IN QUESTION TO STATE HER CASE, TO REQUEST ASYLUM, TO BE GRANTED IT OR REFUSED IT. ON THE OTHER HAND, THERE WAS, WITHOUT QUESTION, A CLEAR VIOLATION BY SOMEONE OF THE PREMISES OF THE VENEZUELAN DIPLOMATIC MISSION. IN THE END, A COURSE OF ACTION AS DESCRIBED BELOW WAS DECIDED UPON. FOR MY PART I INDICATED THAT I COULD SUPPORT THIS COURSE OF ACTION BUT THAT IF ANYTHING MORE POINTED WAS CONTEMPLATED I WOULD HAVE TO FIRST CONSULT THE DEPARTMENT. THE DEPARTMENT WILL NOTE THAT THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS ACTION CAREFULLY AVOIDS ANY JUDGEMENT AS TO WHO THE INTRUDER MIGHT HAVE BEEN. THIS WAS NECESSARY BECAUSE, AS THE DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, THE FOREIGN OFFICE HAD ALREADY, IN A COMMUNIQUE, STATED THAT SECURITY FORCES WERE NOT INVOLVED AND THAT IT WAS PURSUING AN INVESTIGATION.

4. THE AGREEMENT OF THE AMBASSADORS WAS FOR THE PAPAL NUNCIO, ALONE, REPRESENTING THE CORPS TO SEEK AN INTERVIEW THAT SAME AFTERNOON IF POSSIBLE WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER. HE WAS TO MAKE THREE POINTS, AND ONLY THREE POINTS, AS FOLLOWS:

A) THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS IS DISTURBED AND CONCERNED OVER THE VIOLATION OF THE PREMISES OF THE EMBASSY OF VENEZUELA.

B) THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS IS LIKEWISE CONCERNED THAT THE PROTECTION FURNISHED BY THE URUGUAYAN GOVERNMENT (POLICE) HAD BEEN INADEQUATE AND INEFFECTIVE IN PREVENTING THE INCIDENT.

C) THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS HAS TAKEN NOTE OF THE GOVERNMENT'S STATEMENT THAT A FULL INVESTIGATION IS IN PROCESS AND EXPRESSES THE HOPE THAT IT WILL BE PURSUED WITH ALL NECESSARY VIGOR SO THAT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THOSE GUILTY CAN BE IDENTIFIED AND APPROPRIATELY PUNISHED.

5. IT WAS THE UNANIMOUS BELIEF OF THE CORPS THAT ACTION AS ABOVE WOULD CONSTITUTE AN APPROPRIATE MESSAGE OF ITS CONCERN TO THE GOU, AND ITS FEELING OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE VENEZUELAN AMBASSADOR OVER THE VIOLATION OF HIS EMBASSY'S IMMUNITY; YET IT WOULD NOT INVOLVE THE CORPS ITSELF IN CHALLENGING THE GOU'S VERSION AS ENUNCIATED BY THE FOREIGN MINISTRY. THE VENEZUELAN AMBASSADOR EXPRESSED HIS

SATISFACTION. IT IS ASSUMED THAT THE NUNCIO HAS ACTED AS INDICATED BUT WE HAVE NO CONFIRMATION AS OF NOW.
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